

There are many different types of wildland firefighters. Most firefighters begin as handcrews, hotshots, or engines. Once a summer of experience is earned, then firefighters can choose to explore helitack, smokejumping, or dispatch positions.

Every position in firefighting has specialized tasks that are key to fire suppression. However, with the exception of dispatch, all firefighters breathe smoke and play in the dirt with the end result of putting a fire out.

There is specific information about each position available on the web. You are also encouraged to call your local Forest Service office and ask to speak to someone in Fire; they can help answer any questions you may have.

HANDCREWS/HOTSHOTS

http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/people/handcrews/about_handcrews.html

ENGINE CREWS

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/people/enginecrews/index.html>

SMOKEJUMPERS

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/people/smokejumpers/index.html>

HELITACK

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/aviation/helicopters/index.html>



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There are wildland firefighters for many other agencies and organizations. Here are a few other federal partners:

Bureau of Land Management

<http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire.1.html>

US Fish and Wildlife

<http://www.fws.gov/fire/>

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/fire/employment/employment.cfm>

Bureau of Indian Affairs

There are also many state and private organizations that contribute to the effort of fighting wildland fire.

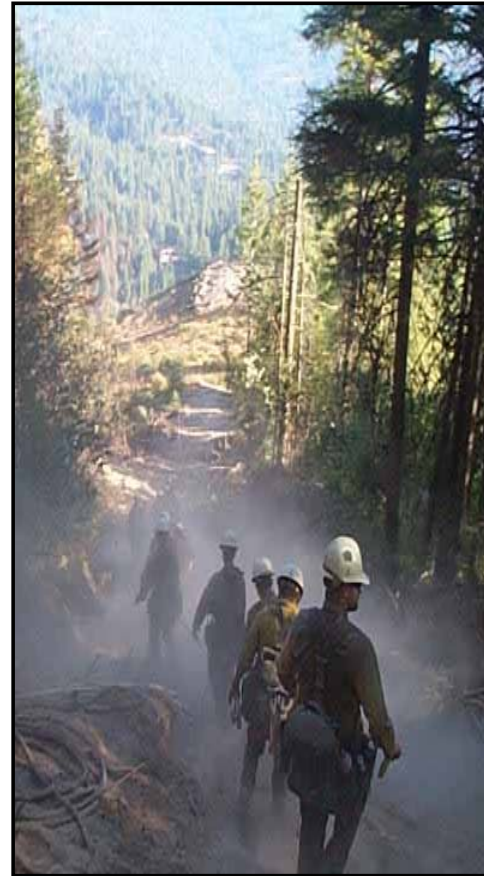
QUESTIONS?

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So you want to be a

Wildland Firefighter



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THE PROFESSION AND HOW YOU
CAN APPLY FOR THE US FOREST
SERVICE

How Hard Can It Be?

If you like hiking without trails; packing between 40 and 120 pounds of food, water, and supplies on your back; eating and sleeping in the dirt for days on end; and not having consistent showers, then you may be interested in becoming a wildland firefighter.

Wildland firefighters are often away from home, without days off, for 14+ days at a time. Wildland firefighters do not work regular schedules of 8 hour days but are often asked to work 16+ hours a day when on a fire or an assignment. Wildland firefighters do not get normal summer vacations but spend all summer working on their districts or traveling about the North American continent responding to fire in a variety of conditions.

If any of this sounds interesting to you then read on.....



H-T Engine 7533

How Do I Apply?

Applying for a job with the Forest Service involves many different steps. To begin, go to www.usajobs.opm.gov to locate Forest Service vacancy announcements.

Beginning firefighters with no college or technical expertise usually qualify for GS 3 positions, and those with some college or technical training can apply for GS 4 positions. Most GS3/4 positions are listed as nation wide announcements. In the application process you will be asked to designate specific locations where you are interested in working. Once you locate the job announcement number you are interested in, then you will access the AVUE system.



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Tips for Success Using AVUE

AVUE is complex software that may be confusing to some. There are resources available to help you navigate the system. This can be located at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/fsjobs/employ/asap/User_Guide_applicant.doc

There are many other “tricks of the trade” to be aware of. The following are tips to help you get a job.

MAKE A PHONE CALL

Call the locations you are interested in working for, and give them your name. Prepare a few questions to ask the local firefighters. Questions like: do you have housing? When do you think you will be hiring? What kind of gear do I need to

buy? This will ensure your personality and name will stick in their minds when it comes to selecting someone.

GRANT PERMISSION TO CONTACT YOUR CURRENT SUPERVISOR

It is amazing how many people do not check this box on their applications in AVUE. Often when someone is looking at a resume and notices that permission is not granted – the application goes to the back of the list.

JOB HISTORY

Take the time and describe your past work history. Do not write, “I worked at a restaurant,” as this does not give a good impression of your skills and abilities. Talk yourself up and in detail. Write, “Demonstrated ability to multi task by washing dishes, busing tables and running errands when expected.”

SPELL CHECK

You can be the smartest and most qualified person for the job, but if your



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application has spelling errors it leads people to think otherwise. Along the same line, make sure you have someone else proofread your application. Another set of eyes is always helpful.

DOUBLE AND TRIPLE CHECK

Make sure you go back over the entire application and check for errors. If there is the slightest question as to whether you needed to check a box or not, ASK!



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Helpful Websites

Forest Service Fire

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/links/index.html>

Firefighter Fitness

<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>

General Information/Questions

<http://www.wildlandfire.com>